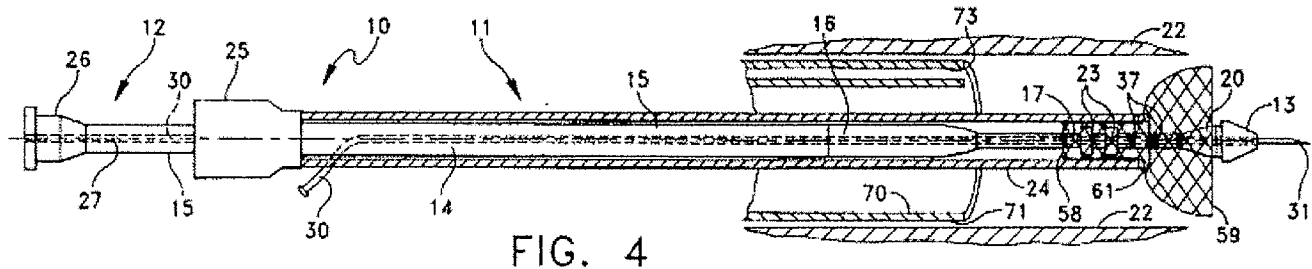


REMARKS

In response to the office action mailed October 23, 2007, Applicant amended claims 11 and 23 and cancelled claims 33 and 34. Claims 1-10, 14, 15, 25, 28, 31, and 32 were previously cancelled. Thus, claims 11-13, 16-24, 26, 27, 29, and 30 are presented for examination.

Claims 11-13, 22-24, 29, 30, 33, and 34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ravenscroft, US 5,702,418 ("Ravenscroft"). But Ravenscroft does not disclose a stent delivery system that includes a stent and a grip member having a hub region and a body region tapered from a first end to a second end, where the hub region of the at least one grip member is positioned proximal to the stent and, during use, the stent directly contacts the hub region, as required by claims 11-13, 22, 29 and 33. Similarly, Ravenscroft fails to disclose a method that includes providing a stent and a grip having a hub region and a body region tapered from a first end to a second end, where the hub region of the grip is positioned proximal to the stent, and retracting an outer sheath relative to a catheter shaft, where the stent directly contacts the hub region of the grip when the outer sheath is retracted, as required by claims 23, 24, 30, and 34.

Referring to Ravenscroft's Fig. 4, which is reproduced below, Ravenscroft discloses a stent delivery system that includes a distal tip 13. See, e.g., Ravenscroft, col. 5, lines 1-3. The Examiner contended that the tapered portion of Ravenscroft's distal tip 13 corresponds to Applicants' claimed tapered body region and that the enlarged distal portion of Ravenscroft's distal tip 13 corresponds to Applicants' claimed hub region. But, even assuming the Examiner's contentions are correct, which Applicant does not concede, Ravenscroft's system does not include a hub region that is positioned proximal to a stent, as required by Applicant's claims. To the contrary, the enlarged portion of Ravenscroft's distal tip 13 is located distal to his stent 20. See, e.g., id., Figs. 1, 4, and 5. Further, a person of ordinary skill would not have modified Ravenscroft's system to position the enlarged portion of his distal tip 13 proximal to his stent 20.



Moreover, Ravenscroft's stent 20 is not described as directly contacting the enlarged distal portion of his distal tip 13 during use (or as his outer sheath 24 is retracted), as required by Applicant's claims. Rather, Ravenscroft illustrates his outer sheath 24 as abutting the enlarged distal portion of his distal tip 13 in an initial configuration and illustrates his stent 20 as being located proximal to the enlarged distal portion of his distal tip 13. See, e.g., id., Fig. 1. As shown in Fig. 4 above, when the outer sheath 24 is retracted to deploy the stent 20, the stent 20 remains proximal to the enlarged distal portion of the distal tip 13. See, e.g., id., col. 6, lines 21-40; Fig. 1. Thus, even if Ravenscroft's distal tip 13 were considered to include a hub region (e.g., the enlarged distal portion of the distal tip 13) and a tapered body region (e.g., the tapered proximal portion of the distal tip 13), which Applicant does not concede would be a fair characterization of Ravenscroft's system, his stent would not contact the hub region during use (or as the outer sheath is retracted). Moreover, a person of ordinary skill in the art would not have modified Ravenscroft's system to place his stent 20 in contact with the enlarged distal portion of his distal tip 13. As noted above, the enlarged distal portion of Ravenscroft's distal tip 13 provides an abutting surface for his outer sheath 24. There is no indication that it would be physically possible to place both Ravenscroft's stent 20 and his outer sheath 24 in abutment with the enlarged distal portion of his distal tip 13, let alone desirable.

In view of the foregoing discussion, Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 11-13, 22-24, 29, 30, 33, and 34 as being anticipated by Ravenscroft.

Claims 16-21, 26, and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ravenscroft. For at least the reasons discussed above, Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

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Respectfully submitted,

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